

KRIENGSAK CHAREONWONGSAK

Former Prime Ministerial Advisor of Thailand; Senior Fellow, Harvard University;
Chairman, Nation-Building Institute

Jim HOAGLAND

Next, we are going to shift geographic scenes a little, and we have Mr Kriengsak Chareonwongsak, who is the President of the Institute of Future Studies for Development in Thailand.

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The state of the world, I believe, is an outdated past, a broken present, and an evolving future. There are three major pillars that we will deal with regards to the state of the world; economic, societal, and political. I called this “Post New World Order”.

I believe that there are five major, key areas in the economic state of the world that we need to look at as a key example of our contemporary position. The first thing would be disparity of the haves and the have-nots. About 15 years ago I created a rule in one of my articles: the 99:1 rule, where the tendency is that 1% of people are able to accumulate 99% of wealth and assets. This is the disparity tendency without intervention, and there are all kinds of good and bad interventions. Bad interventions could make it worse, and good interventions need to be thought through, but what we see is a world with capital haves and capital have-nots, education haves and education have-nots, skill haves and skill have-nots. You also see technological haves and technological have-nots, innovation haves and innovation have-nots, and this has clearly set the scene for disparity in the world today. How do we go through the world when disparity cannot be solved and is a stubborn problem that could not be tackled and creates more and more problems? We have seen some examples of this environment where we see the IS at work and we know there must be an underlying problem that disparity is more conducive to, for example. The second thing I would like to mention economically is the rising of the new CIA. Let me mention to you a new term I coined some years ago in my article where C stands for China, I for India, and A for ASEAN, and this block of countries comprises more than half of the world population and they are rising. Some of you clearly see China rising and India is following suit, and the clear engine of the ASEAN, if they can stay together and integrated, and not fall by the wayside, these three blocks combined could be a formidable issue of the future. The third idea I would like to mention about the economic situation is multinational corporations as kings. We have seen this for years now, and it is going to be even more prevalent in the future. For example, just looking at the situation of China and India, in 2003, 19 of top 500 corporations were from these countries, but a few years ago, in 2012, 127 of the top 500 are from India and China. These are the rising indicators of what is coming. There are multinational corporations which expand and continue to dominate.

The fourth key idea I would like to mention is what I call, technological convergence innovation. I believe that we are living in a highly technological breakthrough era in many spheres, but we are yet to see the real convergence of all this technology in combination. Once it precipitates in innovations, it will drive even more in the coming future. The last point in the economic sphere is governance crisis. I have noticed in the world over the last years that the crises are increasingly due to the lack of architecture of international governance that cannot be fully worked out, not only in each country but on a global scale.

Let me turn to the second pillar, the societal pillar, and again, there are five key areas I want to mention. Firstly, the issue of aging populations is coming closer to the forefront, faster than we think. We are going to have a lot of old people, over 65 years of age, more than roughly 17% very soon. This will present us with a problem we have never experienced in the entire human history. The second thing is the refugee and migration crisis, not only domestic migration due to the displacement of people as a result of internal revolt and the shift of power-base, but also international migration that creates major key issues that have been seen in the last few years in Europe, taking

refugees from other parts of the world, and this is going to increase due to the turbulent world we are living in. I also clearly see the urbanisation issues that are coming forward. Recently I wrote an article in my newspaper column, saying that we need to coin the new term, 'magna-city'. Urbanisation is already seeing half of the world living in urban areas, which will be 70% in the next few years, but what is more interesting is, cities of mega size and meta size will not be an issue of the future, but the future will be, what I call, 'magna-cities', which take on the characteristics of a huge number of people, more than 50 million people in one continual block, living together. That is going to be a land mass of city that we do not yet know how to manage, and is beyond what we have learned in human history. Urbanisation that takes on the various dimensions would challenge us, which brings me to the fourth dimension, what I call morality frontier challenges. Due to many issues that have emerged, technological advancements that bring about issues that we need to crack through, ethics, morality, that is behind those implications is going to come more and more to the forefront of the deliberation of this issue. We will see not only cloning, which is an old issue that is going to come back again, but the issue of mercy killing, and sexual revolution. AI and robotic improvements that go so far will bring about morality issue that we need to deal with in the future. The fifth issue of the societal pillar that I see coming, is terrorism fatigue, and this is everywhere, but we do not know how to solve it. It is how to handle fatigue properly which weighs down the entire world.

The final pillar is the political pillar, and, again, there are five things I will mention. Firstly, we have already passed one, the age of bipolarity to the hegemony of unipolarity, which is moving to multipolarity, with subgroups within each of those poles. We are seeing this experiencing through the walking in and out of various blocks and the various alliances are going to be rebuilt and recreated in new ways. This is the political world in which we will live. Secondly, the political figure is moving from a new world order to a post-new-world order. I think that the liberal order that we have seen in the new world order will shift towards what I call the pragmatic order. I concur with Richard Cooper, of Harvard, that President Trump's announcement was not true protectionism, but I called selective protectionism, pragmatic benefits that you are gaining. This is going to be an issue that will be on the table, for example, the pragmatism of Turkey in the EU or not in the EU, join NATO or not join NATO, moving in with Russia or India or not, and Brexit. We are no longer people who are ideologically consistent, we are people who are more and more result orientated, and pragmatic result are what we are getting at. You see Trump announcing 'America first', and national common good instead of global common good. This is the issue pragmatically being dealt with at hand of desperation because the government of each country is no longer sovereign, as they are meant to be. The erosion of the sovereignty of each sovereign state has come through an age of globalisation that we have never seen before, and this is the real issue that is changing many things. My third point on the political pillar would be separatism syndrome. You notice that separatists are coming more and more as a reaction to the inability to solve problems in certain cluster of grouping of affinity, be it ethnics, religious, or other groupings. You see the self-determination effort to rely on themselves by separating out; the Brexit issue, see the Scotland and Northern Ireland, Wales and the UK, Basque from Spain and France, and Catalonia from Spain. You see the issue of Lombardy from Italy, Kurdistan that wants to come out of Turkey, from Iran, Iraq, Syria; Tibet, Uyghur from China, and Taiwan, I call these issues, separatism syndrome as a reaction to try to have some self-determination in a world where they cannot have control and cannot rely on a broader grouping. My fourth point is what I call non-professional politicians. Being a politician myself for many years, I have noticed that professional politicians are no longer being called upon. The world is desperately grasping for an unconventional way, and unconventional style politics, anti-establishment that have no hope, and they are searching for all kinds. You look at the world having Trumps, Duterte of the Philippines, and Jokowi in Indonesia, and the young leaders are emerging, and are being elected everywhere. People are calling for non-professional politicians who are going to be different from the establishment they have been used to. Finally, my last point is democratic breakdown. I noticed, when I was working together with Bertelsmann people in Germany, in the Democracy Index over the last decades, I have noticed that countries have turned democratic, at least in form, elections, for example, are not increasing but decreasing. In the year 2000, 120 countries out of 192 were democratic. Twelve years later, 118 out of 194 were democratic; the percentage has decreased. We are not moving forward, we are moving backward. A coup d'état would never have been expected in many places that have experienced it, even in my own country; we were a shining star for democracy many decades ago, now we have rolled back to a coup d'état government. The Human Freedom Index says that people's freedom is going down.

In conclusion, I suggest that the economic, societal, and political pillars, and the five points I cited in each category illustrate the state of the world we are living in, and I suggest a definition of what I call "thinking revolution". In a



nutshell, revolutions begin with a thinking revolution, which is a change at the foundation and fundamental in our difference until it changes the paradigm of economic, political, and social paradigms. Without that, that's not a revolution. I think there is a need for revolution coming that will change the entire architecture of the new global order so that economic, political, and social paradigms will be shifted and changed because today we experience a broken world that we cannot repair. It needs a revolution indeed.